

**Amendments to the Specification:**

On page 3, lines 1-6, please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

These unwanted stresses can damage of the boat hull at the attachment point for the topstay. Further, depending on the boat hull construction, such unwanted stresses can bend and deflect the boat hull and thus cause greater damage and form cracks in the boat hull. In addition, such unwanted stresses bend and deflect the oarlock pin and the rigger, thus changing the desired settings for the oar pitch and increasing the danger of snapping off an oarlock pin.

On page 4, lines 16-17, please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

It is another object of the invention to provide such a topstay that can be used on the port or and starboard side of the hull.

On pages 4-5, lines 21-4, please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

These and other objects are met by the topstay presented herein that comprises an outer and inner tube member, longitudinally aligned and telescopically connected together. Formed on the distal end of the outer tube member is a transversely aligned tubular housing that receives ~~connects to~~ a pin connector. In the preferred embodiment, the tubular housing is aligned approximately 45 degrees to the longitudinal axis of the outer tubular member. During assembly, the pin connector is selectively rotated and then fixed inside the tubular housing. The pin connector is then connected to the oarlock pin.

On page 6, lines 11-15, please replace the paragraph with the following amended

1 paragraph:

2 Referring to the drawings, and particularly to Figs. 1 and 2, a topstay 11 according  
3 to the present invention is secured at its distal end by a bolt 12, to the top end of the oarlock  
4 pin 13 and is secured at its ~~distal~~ proximal end by bolt 14 to the indicated boat hull 15. The  
5 bottom of the oarlock pin 13 is depicted as being secured by a nut 16 to the rigger 17 attached  
6 to the boat hull 15. An oarlock 18 is shown in phantom lines for clarity.

7 On page 6, lines 16-20, please replace the paragraph with the following amended  
8 paragraph:

9 As shown in Fig. 3, the topstay 11 comprises an outer tubular member 20 made of  
10 metal, preferably aluminum. Attached via a weld 28 to the distal end 24 of the tubular  
11 member 20 is a short, fixed tubular housing 24, also, made of metal, preferably aluminum.  
12 The tubular housing 24 is diagonally aligned on the tubular member 20 so that the ~~The~~  
13 longitudinal axis 25 of the tubular housing 24 intersects the longitudinal axis 23 of the outer  
14 tubular member 20 at an angle other than zero, preferably at or near 45 degrees.

15 On page 7, lines 12-16, please replace the paragraph with the following amended  
16 paragraph:

17 Inserted and fixed ~~in position~~ in the proximal end 22 of the outer tubular member 20  
18 is a sleeve 45. The sleeve 45 includes a longitudinally aligned threaded bore 46 that  
19 selectively connects to the external threads 60 formed on the distal end 51 of ~~on~~ the inner  
20 tubular member 50. The sleeve 45 is made of ~~nylon or other~~ suitable material capable ~~of~~ of  
21 being ~~bonded or welded~~ or bonded to the outer tubular member 20.

22 On page 7, lines 17-22, please replace the paragraph with the following amended  
23 paragraph:

1           The inner tubular member 50 has a external threads 60 formed near its distal end 51  
2 that connect to threaded bore 46 formed on the sleeve 45. The inner tubular member 50 is  
3 made of metal preferably aluminum and the length of its external threads is determined by the  
4 desired range over which the length of the topstay 11 can be adjusted. A jam nut 54 is  
5 attached to the threads 60 and enables the user to lock the inner tubular member 50 in a  
6 desired length of the outer tubular member 20.

7           On pages 7 and 8, lines 23-3, please replace the paragraph with the following  
8 amended paragraph:

9           Inserted into the proximal end 52 of the inner tubular member 50 is a plug 56. The  
10 plug 56 includes a wide flange surface 57 that extends over the proximal end 52: when the  
11 plug 56 is inserted into the inner tubular member 50. Formed inside the plug 56 is a threaded  
12 bore 58. The plug 56 is secured to the inner tubular member 50 by either bonding or welding,  
13 depending on the material choice and preference.

14           On page 8, lines 4-11, please replace the paragraph with following amended  
15 paragraph:

16           Aligned transversely over the flange surface 57 of the plug 56 is a cylindrical pivot  
17 connector 65. Extending transversely through the center axis of the pivot connector 65 is a  
18 non-threaded bore 66. The bore 66 is countersunk at its opposite ends to improve seating for  
19 the plug 56 and for a spring washer 55 68 as shown in Fig. 3. During assembly, a bolt 70  
20 extends through the pivot connector 65 and connects to the threaded bore 58 formed ~~on~~ in the  
21 plug 56. ~~An optional~~ The spring washer 68 ~~may be~~ is placed around the bolt 70. ~~The bolt 70~~  
22 ~~is then tightened to securely attach the~~ The pivot connector 65 is then secured to the proximal  
23 end 52 of the inner tubular member 50: by the means of bolt 70. During the process of

1 tightening bolt 70, spring washer 68 is not fully compressed to allow axial rotation of the  
2 inner tubular member 50 with respect to the pivot connector 65.

3 On page 8, lines 12-18, please replace the paragraph with the following amended  
4 paragraph:

5 Also shown in Fig. 3, the proximal end 52 of the inner tubular member 50 is  
6 connected to a base bracket 75. The base bracket 75 includes a flat plate 76 with two upward  
7 extending arms 78, 80. A main hole 77 is formed on the flat plate 76 that receives a bolt 14  
8 to attach the base bracket 75 to the boat hull. Formed on the arms 78, 80 are holes 79, 81,  
9 respectively, designed to receive and hold the pivot connector 65 transversely over the base  
10 bracket 75. During assembly, the pivot connector 65 is extended between the two holes 79,  
11 81 to ~~attached~~ attach the distal end of the topstay to the base bracket 56.

12 On pages 8 and 9, lines 22-1, please replace the paragraph with the following  
13 amended paragraph:

14 With proper modifications known to one skilled in the art at least a portion of the  
15 outer tubular member 20 and the inner tubular member 50, can be made of composite  
16 material such as polymeric resin reinforced with fibers.

17 On page 9 and 10, lines 15-6, please replace the paragraph with following amended  
18 paragraph:

19 A second embodiment for the first joint is depicted in Fig.~~s~~ 5 and Fig. 6, which  
20 shows the pin connector 35 seated directly in the modified outer tubular member 61. The  
21 tubular housing 24 is formed by two suitably identical spacers 82 and 82' ~~are~~ diagonally cut  
22 and contoured on one side to fit the outer diameter of the outer tubular member 61 so that the  
23 pin connector 35 is diagonally aligned at approximately 45 degrees with respect to the

1 modified outer tubular member 80. The opposite surfaces of the spacers 82, 82' are squared  
2 off to properly support pin connector 35 and bolt 40 with its lock washer 41 and its washer  
3 42. The modified outer tubular member 61 includes an end opening 83 in which an end plug  
4 85 is inserted. Formed on the end plug 85 is a transversely aligned bore 86. The end plug 85  
5 is contoured to close the outer tubular member 61 and to provide stiffness to this outer joint  
6 and to the cross section of the modified outer tubular member 61 when bolt 40 is tightened.  
7 Formed on the distal end of the modified tubular member 61 are two holes 72, 73 that enable  
8 the plug connector 35 and bolt 40 to extend through and connect together. The adjustments  
9 for pin connector 35 are done identically as described for the first embodiment described  
10 above and as shown in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4.

11 On page 10, lines 7-11, please replace the paragraph with the following amended  
12 paragraph:

13 It should be understood that the topstay 11 could include only the plug connector 35  
14 that connects to the outer tubular members 20 and 61. ~~the~~ The topstay 11 could also include  
15 a fixed plug connector as used in the prior art and the plug 56, pivot connector 65, and base  
16 bracket 75 as described herein. In the preferred embodiment, however, the ~~top-stay~~ topstay  
17 11 includes both joints along with the telescoping adjustment feature.